beds at the margin of ponds and brooks. It is common in New England, and grows, according to Pursh, as far south as Virginia.

The genus *Menyanthes* has its *corolla hairy on the upper side; stigma bifid; capsule one celled, two valved.* The species in the present article is named from its *ternate leaves.* Class *Pentandria.* Order *Monogynia.* Natural orders *Rotaceæ*, Lin. *Gentianæ*, Juss.

The root of this plant penetrates horizontally in the bog-earth to a great distance. It is regularly intersected with joints at the distance of about half an inch from each other, these joints being formed by the breaking off of the old petioles and their sheaths. The leaves proceed from the end of the root on long stalks furnished with broad sheathing stipules at base. They are trifoliate, nearly oval, glabrous, somewhat fleshy, and slightly repand, or furnished with many irregularities at the edge, which hardly prevent them from being entire. The scape is round, ascending and smooth, bearing a conical raceme of flowers. Peduncles straight, scattered, supported by ovate concave bractes. Calyx erect, subcampanulate, five parted, persistent. Corolla funnel shaped, the tube short, the border five cleft, spreading and at length revolute, clothed on

the upper part with a coating of dense, fleshy, obtuse fibres. The colour, in the American variety, is generally white, with a tinge of red, particularly on the outside. Stamens five, shorter than the corolla, and alternate with its segments; the anthers oblong-arrow shaped. Germ ovate; style cylindrical, persistent, as long as the corolla; stigma bifid, compressed. Capsule ovate, two valved, one celled. Seeds numerous, minute, attached to two lateral receptacles.

In New England this plant flowers about the middle of May.

The whole plant and particularly the root has an intensely bitter taste, hardly exceeded by that of Gentian and Columbo. This bitterness resides chiefly in an extractive matter, soluble in water and spirit. The root is, however, resinous and impregnates alcohol more strongly than water, and may be precipitated from its tincture, in part, by the latter fluid.

The root of this vegetable is undoubtedly entitled to a high place in the list of tonics. In Europe it has long been admitted to a place in the Materia Medica, and has received the commendations of various physicians. When given in small doses, about ten grains, it imparts vigour to the stomach and strengthens digestion. Its

JACOB BIGELOW *American Medical Botany* BOSTON, 1817-1820 CARY GRAPHIC ARTS COLLECTION, ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY Octavo